

RCA
LRL1-5058 STEREO
RED SEAL

CLEOLAINE

SCHOENBERG

PIERROT LUNAIRE

(IN ENGLISH)

AND SONGS BY CHARLES IVES

THE GREATEST MAN / AT THE RIVER

THE CIRCUS BAND

THE NASH ENSEMBLE / ELGAR HOWARTH

Conductor

ANTHONY HYMAS

Piano

HARVEY

CLEO LAINE

Schoenberg: Pierrot Lunaire, Op. 21

The Nash Ensemble/Elgar Howarth, *Conductor*

Marcia Crayford, *violin, doubling viola*

Christopher van Kampen, *cello*

Judith Pearce, *flute, doubling piccolo*

Antony Pay, *clarinet*

Clifford Benson, *piano*

Ives: The Greatest Man/At the River/The Circus Band

Anthony Hymas *at the piano*

Produced by Ralph Mace • Recording Engineer: Mike Ross

Who is Pierrot?

In the third number from this cycle of Schoenberg's we hear of him as "the taciturn dandy from Bergamo," that is, one of the stock figures in the *Commedia dell'arte* ("Italy's old player": No. 15). Albert Giraud's poems—from which, in 1912, Schoenberg selected "thrice seven" in Otto Erich Hartleben's German translations to set as his Op. 21—were among many contemporary explorations of the character: Stravinsky's *Petrouchka* is a Russian cousin. *Pierrot lunaire* had been commissioned by an actress, Albertine Zehme, who wanted a piece with a speaking part. What she received was something quite new: the words were to be enunciated in *Sprechgesang*, a sort of compromise between song and speech, while four instruments (piccolo/flute, clarinet/bass clarinet, violin/viola, cello) were added to the customary piano accompaniment. Perhaps Schoenberg's invention of this medium owed something to his experience as conductor in a Berlin cabaret in 1901; in any event the theatrical nature of the work was stressed at the first performance, when the instruments were placed behind screens and Frau Zehme appeared in the traditional white and black Pierrot costume (according to some reports she was dressed as Colombine, but later performers have tended not to be so confusing).

From this it would appear that it is the soloist who is Pierrot, and that *Pierrot lunaire* is a dramatic monologue. But the speaker never refers to Pierrot as "myself": much of the first part is narrated in an anonymous first person, and the third part is filled with stories told about Pierrot, until the last poem, where the nameless "I" returns. The crossover point, the only poem in which "I" and "Pierrot" come together, is No. 9—and that is a prayer addressed to Pierrot. If the voice is that of Pierrot, it is a Pierrot who never admits his identity.

Unsure of himself, cast in a vocal limbo, Pierrot is also estranged from his surroundings. Woman, for example, is the object of a frozen longing for the slightest of favors (No. 2) or the butt of cruel parody (No. 17); Pierrot's "sharp desires" are aroused rather by the moon—and the title has announced the lunar (not necessarily lunatic) direction of his thoughts. But even this inanimate body changes its phase: from a sickly siren (No. 7) it becomes an avenging scimitar (No. 13). This crucial alteration is strongly marked in the music, in that the flute, the only accompanist in No. 7, is alone omitted from the ensemble in No. 13, only to enter after the poem for a development (the longest passage of purely instrumental music in the composition) of its earlier solo. It is also noteworthy that these two numbers, the poems that most directly concern the moon, are surrounded by images of death (and though the words are not Schoenberg's, the all-important arrangement is).

Other patterns can be traced in the sequence: in Part 3 the symmetry of poems of nostalgia and of brutal scenes of violence against Cassandra, for example, or the crescendo of religious symbolism from the chalice of No. 1

through "Madonna" to "Red Mass," the midpoint of the cycle. Schoenberg was surprised to discover that these last two numbers gave offense: "I seem to have had an altogether much naiver view of these poems," he once wrote, adding rather enigmatically, "and am still not quite uncertain that this is entirely unjustified." Naiver view or not, the savagery and dislocation of Pierrot are undeniably brought out in Schoenberg's disposition of the texts, and still more so in several of his settings. But Pierrot's smile is not unequivocally sinister; it can also, and at the same time, be the grin of grotesque humor and bitter, ironic satire, or an expression of wistful dreaming. The speaker's motives, masked with moonshine (No. 3), are as impossible to define as his identity.

The sixth poem adds a new twist to that particular puzzle: Pierrot, it seems, is also the poet, intoxicated by moonbeams in No. 1 and crucified on his verses in No. 14. In the Romantic lied, poet, composer and performer had been able to speak as one; *Pierrot lunaire* cracks that identification and leaves a conundrum. Other aspects, too, can be referred to the tradition of German song, for no composer has been more conscious than Schoenberg of his responsibility as a builder on the past, even in what is, in many respects, his most revolutionary work. The instrumental writing—which is as full of brilliant illustrative strokes as of celebrated contrapuntal ingenuities—suggests, in its relative independence from the voice, something of Pierrot's situation; there is a return to a sympathetic songlike accompaniment only in the last number, where Pierrot, perhaps, reaches home.

Born in the same year of 1874, but 5,000 miles from the center of western music in Vienna, Ives had few of Schoenberg's problems—at least as he expressed himself in these songs. Pierrot, whoever he is, has no place at all in the sure assertive world of *The Greatest Man* and *The Circus Band*.

—PAUL GRIFFITHS

In this recording Cleo Laine sings *Pierrot Lunaire* in English. Arnold Schoenberg would have given his fullest approval, for he felt strongly that where English rather than German is the language, the work should be done in translation. In 1942 he wrote to Erwin Stein in London regarding *Pierrot Lunaire*: "I was very glad to hear of your performance. . . . You know that under my conducting I have made records of this piece. . . . Now I want to make the suggestion that you record your performance. Mine is, unfortunately, in spite of my protest, in German, which is much in the way of a full success. . . ." And when *Pierrot Lunaire* was first given in Los Angeles, in 1944, it was sung in English; Schoenberg, who heard the performance on radio, was very enthusiastic about it.

CLEO LAINE SCHOENBERG PIERROT LUNAIRE

Side A

1. Moondrunk

The wine which through the eyes we drink
Flows nightly from the moon in torrents,
And as a spring-tide overflows
The far and distant land.
Desires terrible and sweet
Unnumbered drift in floods abounding.
The wine which through the eyes we drink
Flows nightly from the moon in torrents.
The poet, in an ecstasy,
Drinks deeply from the holy chalice,
To heaven lifts up his entranced
Head, and reeling quaffs and drains down
The wine which through the eyes we drink.

2. Colombine

The pallid buds of moonlight
Those pale and wondrous roses,
Bloom in the nights of summer —
O could I pluck but one!
My heavy heart to lighten,
I search in darkling river
The pallid buds of moonlight,
Those pale white wondrous roses.
Fulfilled would be my longing
If I could softly gather,
With gentle care besprinkle
Upon your dark brown tresses
The moonlight's pallid blossoms.

3. The Dandy

A phantasmagorial light ray
Illumines to-night all the crystalline flasks
On the holy, sacred, ebony wash-stand
Of the taciturn dandy of Bergamo.
In sonorous bronze-enwrought chalice
Laughs brightly the fountain' metallic sound,
A phantasmagorial light ray
Illumines to-night all the crystalline flasks.
Pierrot with countenance waxen
Stands musing and thinks
How he to-night will paint.
Rejecting the red and the green of the east
He bedaubes all his face in the latest of styles
With a phantasmagorial moonbeam.

4. A Chlorotic Laundry Maid

A Chlorotic laundry maid
Washes nightly white silk garments;
Naked, snow-white silvery forearms
Stretching downward to the flood.
Through the glade steal gentle breezes.
Softly playing o'er the stream.
A chlorotic laundry maid
Washes nightly white silk garments.
And the gentle maid of heaven.
By the branches softly fondled.
Spreads on the dusky meadows
All her moonlight-bewoven linen
A chlorotic laundry maid.

5. Valse de Chopin

As a lingering drop of blood
Stains the lip of a consumptive,

So this music is pervaded
By a morbid deathly charm.
Wild ecstatic harmonies
Disguise the icy touch of doom.
As a lingering drop of blood
Stains the lip of a consumptive.
Ardent, joyful, sweet and yearning,
Melancholic sombre waltzes,
Coursing ever through my senses
Like a lingering drop of blood!

6. Madonna

Rise, O mother of all sorrows,
From the alter of my verses!
Blood pours forth from thy lean bosom
Where the sword of frenzy pierced it.
Thy for ever gaping gashes
Are like eyelids, red and open.
Rise, O mother of all sorrows,
From the alter of my verses.
In the lacerated arms
Holdst thou thy Son's holy body,
Manifesting Him to mankind —
Yet the eyes of men avert themselves,
O mother of all sorrows!

7. The Ailing Moon

You ailing, death awaiting moon,
High upon heaven's dusty couch,
Your glance, so feverish overlarge,
Lures me, like strange enchanting song,
With unrequited pain of love
You die, your longing deep concealed,
You ailing, death-awaiting moon,
High upon heaven's dusty couch.
The lover, stirred by sharp desire
Who reckless seeks for love's embrace
Exults in your bright play of light,
Your pale and pain-begotten flood,
You ailing, death-awaiting moon.

8. Night

Heavy, gloomy giant black moths
Massacred the sun's bright rays;
Like a close-shut magic book
Broods the distant sky in silence.
From the mists in deep recesses
Rise up scents, destroying memory.
Heavy, gloomy giant black moths
Massacred the sun's bright rays;
And from heaven earthward bound
Downward sink with sombre pinions
Unperceived, great hordes of monsters
On the hearts and souls of mankind . . .
Heavy, gloomy giant black moths.

9. Prayer to Pierrot

Pierrot! my laughter have I unlearned!
The picture's brightness dissolves.
Black flies the standard now from my mast,
Pierrot, my laughter have I unlearned
O once more give me, healer of spirits,
Snowman of lyrics, monarch of moonshine,
Pierrot, my laughter!

HARVEY

10. Loot

Ancient royalty's red rubies,
Bloody drops of antique glory,
Slumber in the hollow coffins
Buried in the vaulted caverns.
Late at night with boon companions
Pierrot descends to ravish
Ancient royalty's red rubies.
Bloody drops of antique glory.
But there every hair a-bristle,
Livid fear turns them to statues;
Through the murky gloom, like eyes —
Glaring from the hollow coffins
Ancient royalty's red rubies.

11. Red Mass

To fearsome grim communion
Where dazzling rays of gold gleam,
And flickering light of candles,
Comes to the alter Pierrot.
His hand, with grace invested,
Rends through the priestly garments,
For fearsome grim communion
Where dazzling rays of gold gleam.
With signs of benediction
He shows to frightened people
The dripping crimson wafer;
His heart — with bloody fingers
In fearsome grim communion.

12. Song of the Gallows

The haggard harlot with scraggy gizzard
Will be his ultimate paramour.
Through all his thoughts there sticks like a gimlet
The haggard harlot with scraggy gizzard.
Thin as a rake, round her neck a pigtail,
Joyfully will she embrace the rascal,
The haggard harlot!

13. Decapitation

The moon, a polished scimitar
Upon a black and silken cushion,
So strangely large hangs menancing
Through sorrow's gloomy night.
Pierrot wandering restlessly

Stares upon high in anguished fear
Of the moon, the polished scimitar
Upon a black and silken cushion.
Like leaves of aspen are his knees,
Swooning he falters, then collapses.
He thinks: the hissing vengeful steel
Upon his neck will fall in judgement,
The moon, a polished scimitar.

14. The Crosses

Holy crosses are the verses
Where the poets bleed in silence,
Blinded by the peck of vultures
Flying round in ghostly rabble.
On their bodies swords have feasted,
Bathing in the scarlet bloodstream.
Holy crosses are the verses
Where the poets bleed in silence.
Death then comes; dispersed the ashes —
Far away the rabble's clamour,
Slowly sinks the sun's red splendour,
Like a royal crown of glory.
Holy crosses are the verses.

Side B

15. Nostalgia

Sweetly plaintive is the sigh of crystal
That ascends from Italy's old players,
Sadly mourning that Pierrot so modern
And so sickly sentimental is now.
And it echoes from his heart's waste desert,
Muted tones which wind through all his senses,
Sweetly plaintive, like a sigh of crystal
That ascends from Italy's old players.
Now abjures Pierrot the tragic manner.
Through the pallid fires of lunar landscape
Through the foaming light-flood
mounts the longing,
Surging high towards his native heaven.
Sweetly plaintive, like a sigh of crystal.

16. Atrocity

Through the bald pate of Cassander,
As he rends the air with screeches

Bores Pierrot in feigning tender
Fashion with a cranium drill.
He then presses with his finger
Rare tobacco grown in Turkey
In the bald pate of Cassander,
As he rends the air with screeches.
Then screwing a cherry pipe stem
Right in through the polished surface,
Sits at ease and smokes and puffs the
Rare tobacco grown in Turkey
From the bald pate of Cassander.

17. Parody

Knitting needles, bright and polished,
Set in her greying hair,
Sits the Duenna, mumbling,
In crimson costume clad.
She lingers in the arbour,
She loves Pierrot with passion,
Knitting needles, bright and polished
Set in her greying hair.
But, listen, what a whisper,
A zephyr titters softly;
The moon, the wicked mocker,
Now mimics with light rays
Bright needles, spick and span.

18. The Moonfleck

With a snowy fleck of shining moonlight
On the shoulder of his black silk frock-coat
So walks out Pierrot this languid evening,
Seeking everywhere for love's adventure.
But what! something wrong with his appearance?
He looks round and round and then he finds it —
Just a snowy fleck of shining moonlight
On the shoulder of his black silk frock-coat.
Wait now (thinks he) 'tis a piece of plaster,
Wipes and wipes, yet cannot make it vanish.
So he goes on poisoned with his fancy,
Rubs and rubs until the early morning
Just a snowy fleck of shining moonlight.

19. Serenade

With a giant bow grotesquely
Scrapes Pierrot on his viola;

Like a stork on one leg standing
Sadly plucks a pizzicato.
Now here comes Cassander fuming
At this night-time virtuoso.
With a giant bow grotesquely
Scrapes Pierrot on his viola:
Casting then aside the viola,
With his delicate left hand he
Grips the bald pate by the collar —
Dreamily he plays upon him
With a giant bow grotesquely.

20. Journey Home

The moonbeam is the rudder,
Nenuphar serves as boat
On which Pierrot goes southward,
The wind behind his sails,
In deep tones hums the river
And rocks the light canoe.
The moonbeam is the rudder,
Nenuphar serves as boat.
To Bergamo, his homeland,
Pierrot returns once more.
Soft gleams on the horizon
The orient green of dawn.
The moonbeam is the rudder.

21. O Ancient Scent

O ancient scent from far-off days,
Intoxicate once more my senses!
A merry swarm of idle thoughts
Pervades the gentle air.
A happy whim makes me aspire
To joys which I too long neglected.
O ancient scent from far-off days
Intoxicate me again.
Now all my sorrow is dispelled,
And from my sun-encircled casement
I view again the lovely world
And dream beyond the fair horizon.
O ancient scent from far-off days!

*English translation by Cecil Gray
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SONGS BY CHARLES IVES

The Greatest Man

My teacher said us boys should write about
some great man,
so I thought last night 'n thought about
heroes and men
that had done great things, 'n then I got to
thinkin' 'bout my pa; he ain't a hero 'r anything
but phsaw! Say! He can ride the wildest
hoss 'n find minners near the moss
down by the creek; 'n he can swim 'n fish, we
ketched five
newlights, me 'n him!
Dad's some hunter too Oh, my! Miss Molly
Cottontail sure does fly
When he tromps through the fields 'n brush!
(Dad won't kill a lark'r thrush).

Once when I was sick, 'n though his hands were
rough he rubbed the
pain right out. "That's the stuff!"
he said when I winked back
the tears.
He never cried but once 'n that was when my
mother died.
There're lots o' great men
George Washington 'n Lee, but Dad's got
'em all beat holler,
seems to me!

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At the River

Shall we gather at the river,
Where bright angel feet have trod,
With its crystal tide for ever
flowing by the throne of God?
gather at the river!
Yes, we'll gather at the river,
The beautiful, the beautiful river,
Yes we'll gather at the river
that flows by the throne of God.
Shall we gather, shall we gather at the river?

*From Fourth Violin Sonata
Text and tune by R. Lowry
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The Circus Band

All summer long, we boys dream'd 'bout
big circus joys! Down Main Street comes the
band, oh!
Ain't it a grand and glorious noise.
Horses are prancing knights advancing
Helmets gleaming Pennants streaming
Cleopatra's on her throne!
That golden hair is all her own.

Where is the lady all in pink?
Last year she waved to me, I think.
Can she have died?
Can! That! Rot!
She is passing but she sees me not.

*Text by Charles E. Ives
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Side **A** Stereo

LRL1-5058-A

Schoenberg **Pierrot Lunaire**, Op. 21

Part 1

1. Moondrunk; 2. Colombine; 3. The Dandy
4. A Chlorotic Laundry Maid; 5. Valse de Chopin
6. Madonna; 7. The Ailing Moon

REX

● Red Seal

Part 2

8. Night; 9. Prayer to Pierrot
10. Loot; 11. Red Mass; 12. Song of the
Gallows; 13. Decapitation

Cleo Laine

The Nash Ensemble

Elgar Howarth, Conductor

(In English—Recorded in England)

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Side **B** Stereo

LRL1-5058-B

Schoenberg *Pierrot Lunaire*, Op. 21

Part 3

14. The Crosses; 15. Nostalgia
16. Atrocity; 17. Parody
18. The Moonfleck; 19. Serenade
20. Journey Home; 21. O Ancient Scent

TRF

● Red Seal

Charles Ives

The Greatest Man
At the River
The Circus Band

Cleo Laine

1. The Nash Ensemble
Elgar Howarth, Conductor
2-4. Anthony Hymas, *Pianist*
(In English—Recorded in England)

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